Tuna Newsletter

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- Southwest Region
- Southwest Fisheries Science Center

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U.S. TUNA STATISTICS

Editor's note: The following articles were prepared by NMFS personnel from data and information gathered from sources in the U.S. tuna industry. (A. Jackson)

U.S. CANNED TUNA INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS, FOURTH QUARTER 1991

Total receipts of tuna by U.S. canners during the fourth quarter of 1991 (October-December) increased by 10% to the equivalent of 119,300 short tons (st) of whole fish (round weight), compared to the fourth quarter of 1990 (Table 1). The principal species received was skipjack tuna with 69% of the total, followed by albacore and yellowfin with 17% and 15% of the total, respectively. Receipts for all of 1991 totaled 470,800 st, an increase of 5% from the previous year (Table 2). Skipjack receipts were up 38% for the quarter and up 40% for the year, while yellowfin and albacore receipts respectively were down 38% and 3% for the quarter and down 26% and 21% for the year. Although the vast majority of tuna received by U.S. canners is whole fish, some quantity of tuna is received as loins or gilled-and-gutted. The ratio of tuna loins to total receipts for the fourth quarter of 1991 was 11%, compared to 7% for 1990. Receipts of tuna loins for all of 1991 totaled 37,600 st (84,600 st round weight), up 25% from the previous year. [The round weight totals used above were approximated by converting weights of loins and gilled-and-gutted receipts by factors of 2.25 and 1.11, respectively. For the remainder of this article, unconverted receipts are used unless otherwise stated.]

Table 1. Total U.S. cannery receipts (st) by classification of tuna for the fourth quarters of 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Oct-Dec	Type	Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	ROUND	19,300	45,600	25,300	90,200
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	*	1,400	1,400
	LOIN	500	6,200	700	7,400
	TOTAL (as received)	19,800	51,800	27,400	99,000
	TOTAL (estimated round wt)[2]	20,400	59,500	28,400	108,300
1991	ROUND	19,800	59,600	13,000	92,400
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	*	700	700
	LOIN	0	9,900	1,700	11,600
	TOTAL (as received)	19,800	69,500	15,400	104,700
	TOTAL (estimated round wt)[2]	19,800	81,900	17,600	119,300

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

[2]Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

Table 2. Total U.S. cannery receipts (st) by classification of tuna as received by packers for 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Jan-Dec	Type	Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	ROUND	87,200	160,500	127,900	375,700
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	*	5,700	5,700
	LOIN	7,600	18,700	3,800	30,100
	TOTAL (as received)	94,900	179,200	137,500	411,600
	TOTAL (estimated round wt)[2]	104,400	202,600	142,900	449,800
1991	ROUND	74,300	220,000	87,600	382,000
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	*	3,800	3,800
	LOIN	3,600	28,000	6,000	37,600
	TOTAL (as received)	77,900	248,000	97,400	423,400
	TOTAL (estimated round wt)[2]	82,500	283,000	105,300	470,800

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

[2]Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

Table 3. U.S. cannery receipts (st) of domestic and imported tuna by species for the fourth quarters of 1990, 1991 and the recent (1986-90) fourth quarter averages. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Oct-Dec	Source	Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
AMERICAN SAMOA & CALIFORNIA					
1990	DOMESTIC	400	27,400	11,600	39,400
	IMPORTED	4,500	8,400	2,700	15,600
	TOTAL	4,900	35,800	14,300	55,000
1991	DOMESTIC	100	29,200	2,600	32,000
	IMPORTED	4,100	10,500	2,600	17,100
	TOTAL	4,200	39,700	5,200	49,100
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	500	20,400	46,100	67,000
	IMPORTED	4,800	7,600	5,200	17,600
	TOTAL	5,200	28,000	51,300	84,600
PUERTO RICO					
1990	DOMESTIC	0	4,900	7,300	12,200
	IMPORTED	14,900	11,100	5,800	31,800
	TOTAL	14,900	16,000	13,100	44,000
1991	DOMESTIC	300	10,300	2,700	13,300
	IMPORTED	15,300	19,600	7,500	42,300
	TOTAL	15,600	29,800	10,200	55,700
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	500	6,200	14,600	21,300
	IMPORTED	18,200	18,400	13,000	49,600
	TOTAL	18,700	24,600	27,600	70,900
TOTAL					
1990	DOMESTIC	400	32,200	18,900	51,600
	IMPORTED	19,400	19,500	8,500	47,400
	TOTAL	19,800	51,800	27,400	99,000
1991	DOMESTIC	500	39,500	5,400	45,300
	IMPORTED	19,300	30,000	10,000	59,400
	TOTAL	19,800	69,500	15,400	104,700
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	1,000	26,600	60,700	88,300
	IMPORTED	23,000	26,000	18,200	67,200
	TOTAL	24,000	52,600	79,000	155,500

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

Receipts of tuna in American Samoa and California for the fourth quarter of 1991 were down 11%, compared to fourth quarter 1990, mainly due to decreased yellowfin receipts (Table 3). Receipts in Puerto Rico were up by 27% largely as a result of an 86% increase in skipjack receipts. Domestically-caught deliveries to canneries in American Samoa/California were down by 19%, while the domestic component of deliveries to Puerto Rico was up 9%. Skipjack was by far the largest component of all domestic deliveries at 39,500 st, followed by yellowfin, 5,400 st, and albacore, 500 st. Imports accounted for 57% of the tuna delivered to U.S. canners during the fourth quarter. Year-end 1991 totals show that imports accounted for 57% of receipts, with domestic receipts leading imports only for skipjack (Table 4).

Skipjack was the leading import for the fourth quarter of 1991 at 30,000 st, followed by albacore, 19,300 st, and yellowfin, 10,000 st (Table 5). The leading supplier was Taiwan, with 31% of the import market, followed by France and Japan, with 15% and 10% of the market, respectively. The western Pacific Ocean was the major area of capture for skipjack with 54% of the receipts for that species, while the eastern Atlantic and the eastern Pacific were the leading areas for albacore and yellowfin, respectively (Table 6).

Contract prices for domestically caught tuna delivered to U.S. canners in the fourth quarter of 1991 were lower than 1990 prices for all categories of fish (Table 8). U.S. imports of canned tuna packed in water totaled 26,800 st for the fourth quarter of 1991 and 155,400 st for the year, up 22% from 1990. As of March 22, 1992, imports of canned tuna stood at 53,100 st, up 6% from the previous year.

U.S. TUNA FISHERIES UPDATE

EASTERN PACIFIC PURSE SEINE FISHERY

During the period January through March 1992, 9 U.S. purse seiners caught an estimated 5,700 metric tons (mt) of yellowfin tuna and 4,600 mt of skipjack tuna in the eastern tropical Pacific (Figure 1). The yellowfin catch was down 7% from the 1991 catch (6,100 mt), while the skipjack catch was up 84% from the 1991 catch (2,500 mt).

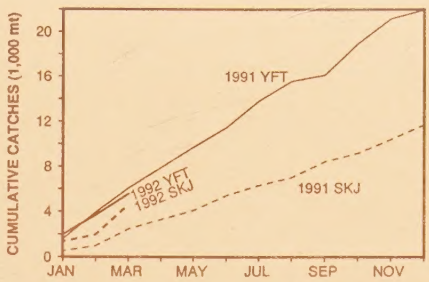

Figure 1. Cumulative tuna catches, by month, for the U.S. eastern Pacific purse seine fishery, 1991 and 1992.

Table 4. U.S. cannery receipts (st) of domestic and imported tuna by species for 1990, 1991 and the recent (1986-90) averages. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Jan-Dec	Source	Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	DOMESTIC	6,900	95,500	93,500	196,000
	IMPORTED	87,900	83,700	43,900	215,600
	TOTAL	94,900	179,200	137,500	411,600
1991	DOMESTIC	6,400	134,900	39,700	181,000
	IMPORTED	71,600	113,100	57,700	242,400
	TOTAL	78,000	248,000	97,400	423,400
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	5,200	100,700	154,900	260,700
	IMPORTED	99,400	105,200	70,800	275,400
	TOTAL	104,500	205,900	225,700	536,100

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

Table 5. U.S. cannery imports (st) of tuna by species[1] and source (flag of catcher vessel) for the fourth quarter of 1991. Totals for the fourth quarter of 1990 are given for comparison. Note that the flag of the catcher vessel does not necessarily reflect the country of export or point of shipment. Totals may not add due to rounding.

COUNTRY	1991				1990
	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]	TOTAL	TOTAL
AUSTRALIA	0	400	100	500	600
ECUADOR	0	1,000	1,100	2,200	2,100
FRANCE	300	6,000	2,800	9,100	200
GHANA	0	3,300	800	4,100	7,800
JAPAN	3,100	2,200	600	6,000	3,400
MOROCCO	0	300	300	700	0
PANAMA	100	3,300	800	4,200	0
SAINT VINCENT	0	400	*	400	0
SOLOMON ISLANDS	0	300	100	300	0
SOUTH KOREA	500	3,000	1,200	4,600	6,700
SPAIN	500	2,800	1,000	4,200	3,400
TAIWAN	14,700	2,800	1,000	18,400	19,600
U.S.A.	0	1,700	100	1,800	0
VENEZUELA	0	400	200	600	1,100
OTHER	100	500	100	700	2,300
UNKNOWN	0	1,600	*	1,700	300
TOTAL (as received)	19,300	30,000	10,000	59,400	47,400
TOTAL (estimated rnd wt)[3]	19,300	42,500	12,200	74,000	55,800

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.

[1]ALB=albacore; SKJ=skipjack; YFT=yellowfin.

[2]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

[3]Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

WESTERN PACIFIC PURSE SEINE FISHERY

In 1991 42 U.S. purse seiners landed an estimated 170,400 mt of skipjack tuna and 34,600 mt of yellowfin tuna in the western Pacific (Figure 2). The skipjack landings were up 59% from the 1990 total, while the yellowfin landings were down 39%. Forty U.S. seiners participated in the fishery in 1990.

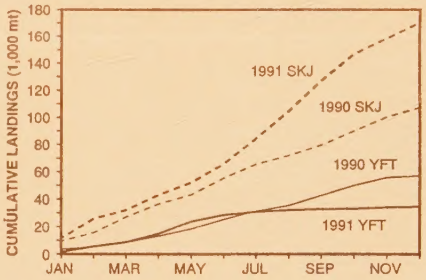

Figure 2. Cumulative tuna landings, by month, for the U.S. western Pacific purse seine fishery, 1990 and 1991.

NORTHERN PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY

Updated figures for the 1991 U.S. north Pacific commercial albacore season show a total of 1,845 mt landed, compared to 2,818 mt in 1990. The 1991 total represents the poorest season on record.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY

The 1991-92 south Pacific albacore troll season, which commenced in December, was coming

Table 6. Receipts (st) of tuna by U.S. canneries by species[1] and area of capture for the fourth quarters of 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE	1990			1991		
	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]
E. ATLANTIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMPORTED	8,900	8,400	3,800	7,200	10,600	3,100
TOTAL	8,900	8,400	3,800	7,200	10,600	3,100
W. ATLANTIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	200	*
IMPORTED	4,500	1,600	600	4,400	400	300
TOTAL	4,500	1,600	600	4,400	600	300
E. PACIFIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	400	2,600	5,300	500	13,000	4,300
IMPORTED	0	1,200	2,100	0	1,000	1,100
TOTAL	400	3,700	7,400	500	14,100	5,500
W. PACIFIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	29,600	13,600	0	26,200	1,000
IMPORTED	5,000	7,200	2,100	5,100	11,400	2,500
TOTAL	5,000	36,800	15,700	5,100	37,600	3,600
INDIAN OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMPORTED	1,000	1,200	0	2,700	6,600	2,900
TOTAL	1,000	1,200	0	2,700	6,600	2,900

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.

[1]ALB=albacore; SKJ=skipjack; YFT=yellowfin.

[2]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

Table 7. Contract price ranges (U.S. $ per st) for skipjack and yellowfin tuna for delivery to U.S. canneries in American Samoa and Puerto Rico by U.S. vessels arriving from trips in fourth quarter 1990 and 1991.

SIZE CLASS (lbs.)	SKIPJACK		YELLOWFIN	
	1990	1991	1990	1991
<3	420	245-397.50	420	245-397.50
3 to 4	620	445-597.50	620	445-597.50
4 to 7.5	820	640-792.50	820	640-792.50
7.5 to 20	895	705-857.50	910	715-867.50
>20	---	---	985-1,010	790-922.50

to a close in early April as seven vessels continued to fish roughly 1,600 miles west of Chile with limited success. Approximately 65 vessels (mostly U.S.) participated in the fishery this season. Total catch as of early April appeared to be less than 3,700 mt, barely half of the 7,100 mt landed in the 1990-91 season. Fishing occurred as far east as 85°W longitude. A number of vessels are now traveling north and will unload their catch in California.

ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY

The U.S. Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery is regulated with an ICCAT annual catch quota of 1,387 mt. As of April 2, the total commercial landing for 1991 stood at 84 mt, down 40% from the 1991 commercial landing (141 mt) for the same period. The incidental longline category south of 36°N latitude closed on 10 April on the determination that the annual quota for that category would be reached.

Gary Rensink and Laura Halko, SWFSC, and Dick Seamans, NMFS Northeast Region, contributed information for this article on fisheries update.

REPORTS

Editor's note: Original reports are published as a service to subscribers and may not represent the views of the NMFS. Readers should contact the authors of reports for details, if needed.

TIME AND DEPTH OF FISH CAPTURE MEASURED USING HOOK TIMERS ON LONGLINE GEAR

Christofer H. Boggs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, Honolulu Laboratory, 2570 Dole Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

The Honolulu Laboratory's Pelagic Resources Investigation recently completed a study using hook timers and time-depth recorders attached to longline gear to measure the time and depth of capture of pelagic species off Hawaii. Knowing the depth of capture is useful to scientists who are conducting stock assessment work. Such information is also useful to fishermen who can then target specific depths to improve their longline catches of desirable species such as bigeye tuna, while reducing the bycatches of billfish and other species of importance to small-scale fisheries operating in the same area.

This study determined that most mahimahi and skipjack tuna are caught on longline hooks at depths of less than 100 meters. Most striped marlin, spearfish and yellowfin tuna are caught at depths of less than 150 meters. And most bigeye tuna are caught at depths of more than 200 meters (Figure 3). Therefore, using a gear configuration with hooks at about 180-300 meters

(which eliminates shallow hooks) could substantially reduce the by-catch of striped marlin, spearfish and other recreationally important billfishes without reducing bigeye tuna catches.

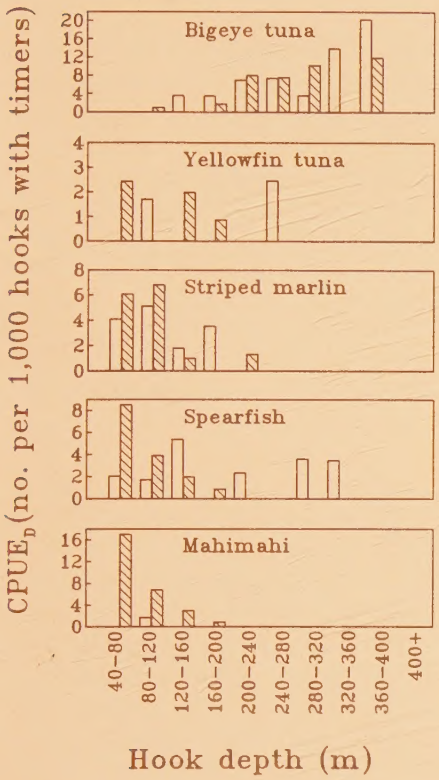

Figure 3. Indices of fish abundance (CPUE) versus depth in 10 depth strata during a longline study off Hawaii in winter 1989 (open bars) and 1990 (cross-hatched bars).

The hook timer data show that bigeye tuna catches per unit of fishing time are highest while longline gear is deployed at its full depth, whereas billfish and mahimahi catches per unit time are highest while the longline gear is being pulled up through the water during retrieval. Therefore, the best fishing strategy for catching bigeye tuna is to leave the gear in the water as long as possible. In contrast, more billfish and mahimahi can be caught by recovering and re-deploying ("tending") the longline gear throughout the day.

Bigeye tuna, striped marlin and spearfish survived up to 5-9 hours after capture (Figure 4), and over half of the most frequently caught species were alive when retrieved. Recaptures of tagged bigeye tuna and striped marlin indicate that the release of some species could be an effective management option.

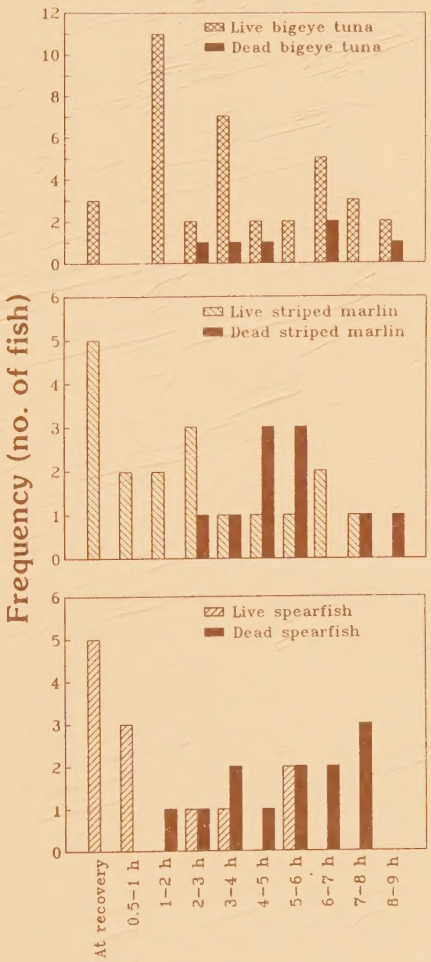

Figure 4. The condition (alive or dead) of three species in relation to the elapsed time between capture and recovery as indicated by hook timers attached to longline gear.

Further studies using hook timers will be conducted in late summer off Hawaii to determine if there are consistent differences between the depth of capture of blue marlin and yellowfin tuna, and to find out whether catches of blue marlin can be reduced without reducing yellowfin tuna catches.

An abstract from a recently published paper written by a SWFSC scientist is also presented in this space as an example of the tuna research conducted at the Center.

RECENT SWFSC PUBLICATION: "ARE U.S. REGULATIONS ON TUNA-DOLPHIN FISHING DRIVING U.S. SEINERS TO FOREIGN-FLAG REGISTRY?"

Gary T. Sakagawa, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, P.O. box 271, La Jolla, California 92038. Published in North American Journal of Fisheries Management, Vol. 11, No. 3, Summer 1991.

From 1979 to 1988, the number of large purse-seiners (>400-tonne carrying capacity) in the U.S. tropical tuna fleet decreased by 35%, largely through sale and transfer of vessels to foreign registration. The U.S. regulations that protect mammalian dolphins associated with harvested schools of tuna are thought to be responsible for this switch to foreign-flag registration. A review of information on U.S. tuna-dolphin regulations, developments in the tuna industry, and dolphin kill data indicates that economic forces have been largely responsible for the reduction in the fleet and for vessels switching to foreign ownership and registration. The U.S. tuna-dolphin regulations played only a minor role, if any, and for the most part were not circumvented by vessels registering under flags of convenience.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TUNA FISHERIES

Editor's note: The following news items, compiled from fishery trade and industry journals, newspapers and NMFS reports, are provided only as a service to

our readers. The NMFS does not guarantee their accuracy.

UNITED STATES

U.S. Customs Begins Enforcing Tuna Embargo--The U.S. Customs Service has begun to enforce an embargo on imports of yellowfin tuna from 20 countries where processors use tuna that has been caught by methods harmful to dolphins. The action was taken at the direction of the Justice Department and the National Marine Fisheries Service to comply with a federal court order. The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California has ordered the government to take actions to halt the importation of tuna that have been harvested by a method that does not protect the dolphin. (*Los Angeles Times*, 3 February 1992)

White House Urges End to Ban on Mexican Tuna--In a move to reconcile competing environmental, economic and foreign policy concerns, the Bush Administration on 5 March 1992 proposed to lift a ban on imported Mexican tuna in exchange for ongoing reductions in dolphin kills by Mexico's tuna fleet. Officials said the proposal, if enacted by Congress, would reduce dolphin kills by 500,000 between now and the year 2000 while removing an irritant in U.S.-Mexico trade relations. But environmentalists charged the plan is unenforceable and riddled with loopholes. They also said it would intensify the debate in Congress over whether U.S. environmental laws should be modified to meet trade concerns. Under the new proposal, the United States would end its tuna embargo if Mexico or Venezuela, the other country faced with an embargo, agreed to a five-year moratorium on the use of dolphin-killing purse seine nets beginning 1 March 1994. In the interim period, the embargoed countries would also be required to steadily reduce dolphin kills each year to the kill rate that existed before 1991. They would agree to allow international observers on their boats. (*Los Angeles Times*, 5 March 1992)

WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

Taiwan to Deliver Its First Super Seiner--Taiwan will deliver its first U.S.-designed super seiner in early 1992. She is the 257 foot *Fong Seong No. 767*, built by the Ching Fu shipyard in Kaohsiung under license from Campbell Shipyards of San Diego. This ninth *Super Pacific* class purse seiner--to be followed shortly by her sister ship, *Fong Seong No. 777*--represents tuna ship specialist Campbell's first entry into one of the faster growing markets of the past ten years. Taiwan has developed a purse seining fleet from scratch since the beginning of the 1980s and is now one of the major players in this fishery. Taiwan began the 1980s with a tuna fleet composed mainly of longliners and pole-and-line vessels, but turned to purse seining to compete with other countries reaping the benefits of this more profitable method. The Taiwanese government initiated programs to entice domestic fishermen into tuna purse seining--on the condition that the boats be built in Taiwan. (*Fishing News International*, February 1992)

New Skipjack Ground Off Australia--Japanese pole-and-line tuna vessels fishing in the Tasman Sea have discovered a promising new skipjack tuna fishing ground. Six vessels have been conducting exploratory fishing in the area since late November 1991 and report a catch which is high in both quality and quantity (an average of 20-30 tons per day). The catch is to be delivered to Japan and is expected to fetch high prices. After depressed skipjack prices in 1991 which generated talk of fleet reductions, this newly found fishery has improved the prospects for the Japanese skipjack tuna industry. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 27-31 January 1992)

Korean Fishery Agreements in South Pacific--The Republic of Korea (ROK) has concluded fishery agreements with Papua New Guinea (PNG) and France. The ROK-PNG agreement allows ROK tuna vessels access to PNG fishing grounds, promotes joint fishery ventures and provides for the exchange of fisheries experts. In 1991, 35 ROK tuna vessels caught approximately 75,000 tons of tuna in PNG waters. The ROK-France agreement allows 125 ROK longliners to catch 6,100 tons of tuna in French Polynesian waters during 1992 for a fee of $835,440. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 17-21 January 1992)

Australia Boosting Tuna Catches--Japanese tuna longliners have had their access to Australian grounds restricted for 1992 following recent negotiations between the two countries. The move paves the way to develop a domestic Australian fishery. Simon Crean, the Australian minister responsible for fisheries, said that Japanese access to southern bluefin tuna around Tasmania has been cut from 800 to 400 tons in response to demands from Australian interests to catch the fish. Access to the tuna fishery off Australia's east coast--mainly yellowfin and bigeye tuna--has been restricted with the maximum number of Japanese vessels reduced from 60 to 50. On the Australian west coast, a 50-mile radius around Perth has been designated off-limits to Japanese longliners to protect game fishing resources and marine parks. "Arrangements to move Australia's tuna industry into the large scale longlining sector have been finalized," said Crean. A combination of charter and joint venture operations with Japanese-style longline vessels will be used to catch 2,900 tons of Australia's southern bluefin quota. "This move will provide the springboard for substantive Australian involvement in the next few

years...and could lead to an Australian longlining industry worth ten times what it is today," Crean said. (*Fishing News International*, January 1992)

Tuna Permits Needed in Japanese Waters--The government of Japan has amended sections of the Japanese Fishing Zone Law pertaining to foreign fishing of highly migratory species (tuna and billfish) within the Japanese exclusive economic zone. Under the amended law, a Japanese government permit will be required for such fishing as of 1 January 1992. The reason for this action is that fishing for highly migratory species in the U.S. EEZ became subject to U.S. government permit effective 1 January 1992. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 2-6 December 1991)

Southern Bluefin Tuna Regime--The governments of Australia, New Zealand and Japan are committed to establishing a formal international regime for management of the southern bluefin tuna (SBT) resource. The three countries currently hold annual consultations on a voluntary basis. Other countries (e.g., Republic of Korea and Taiwan) are also catching SBT, so a formal regime is considered necessary to address resource management issues. The proposal for listing northern bluefin tuna under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) could also affect the SBT resource since CITES contains a provision to cover "look-alike" species. The three countries were scheduled to hold a meeting in New Zealand during April 1992 to discuss the finalization of a formal management regime. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 13-17 January 1992)

EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

Mexico Denies Fishing Licenses--The Mexican Secretariat of Fisheries (SEPESCA) has denied fishing licenses for eight U.S. "disadvantaged" vessels. The licenses were requested by the Western Fishboat Owners Association for its tuna baitboats. During some past years, SEPESCA has issued such licenses to the U.S. fishermen. SEPESCA informed the U.S. embassy that the request was denied because the Mexican fleet is redirecting its efforts away from fishing on dolphins. SEPESCA believes that the Mexican fleet has the capacity to fully utilize available resources and in particular wants access to all schools not associated with dolphins. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 16-20 December 1991)

Mexico Strengthens Dolphin and Turtle Protection Measures--President Salinas has introduced a bill to the Mexican Congress that would significantly strengthen existing dolphin and turtle protection measures. The bill is part of a 10-point program he announced in September. It provides prison terms for individuals "intentionally" killing protected species. Existing regulations provide for fines, but not for prison terms. The proposed sanctions in the new bill vary from six months to three years. The term "intentionally" is not defined in the regulations. Mexican Fisheries Attache, Salvador de Lara, explained that the proposed bill does not prohibit fishermen from setting on dolphins, but pertains to individuals who fail to use dolphin protection gear and techniques (safety panels, backdown procedures, etc.). (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 23-27 December 1991)

EASTERN ATLANTIC

EC Tuna Import Price--The European Community (EC) Commission announced a minimum import price for yellowfin tuna during March 1992. Because of the U.S. embargo on tuna caught in association with dolphin, Latin American producers are searching for new markets. As a result the Commission found that foreign producers were trying to enter the EC market by selling tuna at very low prices and that this competition was adversely effecting EC tuna fishermen. The minimum prices imposed are: whole fish over 10 kg, $653.80 per metric

1992 TUNA MEETINGS

(Organizer; meeting type: sci=science, adm=administration)

- MAY 18-21. 43rd Tuna Conference, "Tuna Fisheries and Ecological Interactions." Lake Arrowhead, CA, U.S.A. (Southwest Fisheries Science Center and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission; sci)
- JUN 16-18. Annual Meeting of the IATTC. La Jolla, CA, U.S.A. (IATTC; adm)
- JUL 22-29. Atlantic Billfish Workshop. Miami, FL, U.S.A. (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas; sci)
- SEP 22-29. Atlantic Swordfish Stock Assessment Workshop. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; sci)
- OCT 6-9. Atlantic Albacore Stock Assessment Workshop. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; sci)
- OCT 26-30. East Atlantic Bluefin Stock Assessment Workshop. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; sci)
- NOV 2-6. Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) ICCAT Plenary Sessions. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; sci)
- NOV 9-14. 8th Special Meeting of ICCAT. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; adm)

ton; whole fish under 10 kg, $523.10 per metric ton. Gilled and gutted and other categories of dressed fish are priced accordingly. Should EC processors import tuna below these prices, the EC will impose a levy equal to the price difference. The minimum prices are already in effect and will continue until 31 December 1992. (NMFS Office of Foreign Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 23-27 March 1992)

Southwest Regional Office

501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

E. Charles Fullerton, Director

Southwest Fisheries Science Center

8604 La Jolla Shore Drive--P.O. Box 271
La Jolla, California 92038-0271

Izadore Barrett, Science and Research Director, Southwest Region
Gary Sakagawa, Tuna Program Coordinator

PUBLICATION STAFF

Alan Jackson, Production
David Au, Reports
Ken Raymond, Art Director
Karen Handschuh, Circulation

LIBRARY, HONOLULU LABORATORY
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
SOUTHWEST FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER
8604 LA JOLLA SHORES DR.- P.O. BOX 271
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92038-0271

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